

## Southeast Region

# Hurricane Katrina/Rita Report

September 24-28, 2005



### The following National Wildlife Refuges remain closed:

**Louisiana:** Bayou Sauvage NWR – New Orleans; Bayou Teche NWR – Houma; Big Branch Marsh NWR – Lacombe; Bogue Chitto NWR – Pearl River; Breton NWR – Gulf of Mexico; Cameron Prairie – Bell City; Delta NWR – Venice, Lacassine NWR – Lake Arthur; Sabine NWR – Hackberry

**Alabama:** Bon Secour NWR – Gulf Shores (majority of refuge closed since September 2004 due to Hurricane Ivan)

**Mississippi:** Mississippi Sandhill Crane NWR – Gautier

### Two Refuges open for limited hunting

On Saturday, October 1, two of the five refuges in the Southeast Louisiana Refuge Complex will open to hunters for the fall season with some modifications. Both refuges are still closed to all other public access. All hunting seasons scheduled for Bogue Chitto NWR in Pearl River will open as planned. These include the archery and gun deer hunts, small game, turkey, hog, and waterfowl seasons. On Big Branch Marsh NWR in Lacombe only the waterfowl season will open as planned. This is due to the fire danger posed by the large amount of downed fuels and leaf litter on the refuge, as well as a large number of hanging and hazardous trees which pose a danger to hunters.

### The following field office remains closed:

Office of Law Enforcement – Lake Charles

### Hurricane Katrina

Red Cross volunteers expressed gratitude for the support provided by the Service at Big Branch Marsh NWR in Lacombe, Louisiana. Tired volunteers are brought here to eat a hot meal, take a shower and rest.

This week, the Service's Incident Command Team demobilized operations. Efforts are now focusing on bringing Service facilities affected by Katrina back on line and conducting detailed damage assessments.

### Hurricane Rita

Joint coordination continues between the Service's Southeast and Southwest regions.

An Incident Command Team is currently located at Southland Field Airport in Sulphur, Louisiana. The team has assisted in placing eight tarps on Service employee homes affected by Hurricane Rita. Damage assessments to Service facilities are underway.

Within two hours after Rita made landfall, Service employees inspected a damaged flood protection levees south of Houma along Bayou Little Caillou in the Chauvin community.

### Additional information

Media contact coordination is being handled by the Regional Office of External Affairs 404/679 7287.



USFWS photos

*Barret Fortier and Paul Yakupsack use both of Mandalay's airboats to inspect important flood protection levees south of Houma along Bayou Little Caillou in the Chauvin community. They were accompanied by Terrebonne Parish President Don Schwab, Parish Manager Barry Blackwell, Public Works Director Al Levron and Dr. Don Schwab, Jr. as the waters were still rising in Terrebonne. They were asked to stand by until the waters start receding so a more complete inspection could be made in the remainder of the parish.*